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Senate Actions Affecting Intelligence

Since its introduction in February, the comprehensive charter legislation, S.2284, has been in a state of flux. The attempt by Congress to write a detailed charter for the U.S. intelligence agencies appears to have collapsed in a stalemate between the Carter Administration and the Hill. Election-year politics seem to have created a climate for delay of any action until next year. After having reworked and shortened the original 172-page bill several times, and after many closed sessions of the Senate Intelligence Committee, it is obvious that no version is acceptable to all parties involved.

The Intelligence Accountability Act of 1980, the most recent and shortest (7-page) version, was considered by the Committee at its closed April 30 meeting. This bill amends the National Security Act of 1947 and provides that only the Senate and House Intelligence Committees be briefed by the Director of Central Intelligence of "any significant anticipated activity," prior notice of such activities is limited to the chairman and ranking minority members of each Committee in extraordinary circumstances as determined by the President; makes it a crime, punishable by jail sentences of five or ten years and fines up to \$50,000, for an official or former official of the government to disclose the identity of an intelligence agent; provides that any actions by an intelligence agency be done according to procedures approved by an agency director; provides for the Attorney General to approve agency guidelines for activities directed at U.S. persons; and modifies the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act to protect classified information and to limit judicial review. This draft is being considered by the full Committee as this newsletter goes to press.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on April 17 on the role and accountability of the National Security Advisor. Testimony was heard from Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary of State; Brent Scowcroft, former Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Thomas Frank and I.M. Destler.

House Actions Affecting Intelligence

The House Intelligence Committee has continued hearings on the comprehensive charter legislation,

H.R.6588. Hearings were held on April 15 and 22 with testimony heard from journalists, clerics and academicians, focusing on section 132 which would prohibit their use by intelligence agencies as cover. A summary of the testimony is included elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Oversight Subcommittee commenced hearings on prepublication review and secrecy agreements on April 16 and 24 and continued these on May 1st. This interest is a direct result of the recent Supreme Court decision in the Snepp Case. The subcommittee expects to continue its study of the matter in May, and a summary of the April testimony is included elsewhere in this newsletter.

The House Judiciary Committee's Civil and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee met on April 24 to resume its consideration of the graymail legislation, H.R.4736 and H.R.4745. The CIA, Department of Defense and Department of Justice offered further evidence of the administration's desire for passage of this needed legislation. A summary of the testimony is included elsewhere in this newsletter.

On April 30, the House Intelligence Committee decided in open session not to take any action on the Hughes-Ryan Amendment, but rather to leave intact the language proposed by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. The proposed new rule would limit reporting of covert actions to the House and Senate Intelligence Committees. This language was adopted March 12 as part of this year's foreign aid legislation, H.R. 6942, International Security and Development Authorization FY81. (See April newsletter.) The foreign aid bill will now move to the floor of the House. The Intelligence Committee agreed, without formal vote, to Rep. Aspin's proposal to pose no objection to the separate law, leaving open the possibility of the Intelligence Committee coming up with its own version later as part of a charter.

Inside

ABA Activities	p.2
Senate Intelligence Hearings	p.2
Presidential Protection of Intelligence	p.3
House Intelligence Hearings	p.4
Report on Canadian Intelligence	p.5
Excerpts from Schlesinger Testimony	p.6
ABA/University of Chicago Conference	p.7
House Graymail Hearings	p.7
CIA Study of Soviet Propaganda	p.8

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evidence without change of classified status. All concurred that final agreement on a graymail bill was near, and that the required and needed uniformity for these procedures would be most welcome by all concerned parties.

CIA Study Details Soviet Covert Action and Propaganda

On February 6, 1980, Mr. John McMahan, Deputy Director for Operations, Central Intelligence Agency, presented to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives by far the most detailed analysis yet made public of Soviet covert action techniques and the manner in which these techniques are orchestrated with Soviet propaganda and diplomacy. The study, which was prepared at the request of Congressman Ashbrook, ran over 100 typewritten pages, and was supplemented by an annex containing 16 examples of Soviet forgeries of U.S. Government documents and a technical analysis of these forgeries.

In dealing with covert action techniques, examples were given of the Soviet use of propaganda, clandestine radios, foreign communist parties and international front organizations and "friendship societies", agents of influence, and disinformation to manipulate foreign governments. The study also dealt with the Soviet use of economic warfare and Soviet support for terrorist and paramilitary operations.

The study presented a detailed analysis of the Soviet campaign against the proposed modernization of the NATO Theatre Nuclear Forces (TNF), focusing on the Soviet campaign against the "neutron bomb". These studies underscored the skillful orchestration of diplomacy, propaganda and covert techniques in support of a single objective.

In the case of the "neutron bomb" it was pointed out that in late January, 1978 every Western government received a letter from Leonid Brezhnev warning that the deployment of the "neutron bomb" would constitute a serious threat to detente. These announcements received heavy media coverage worldwide. On the heels of this, Western parliamentarians received similar letters from members of the Supreme Soviet and Soviet trade union officials sent letters to union organizations and leaders in the Western countries. The next stage was a whole series of conferences under the auspices of well-known international front organizations, sometimes in partnership with other organizations like the International

Atomic Energy Agency, which is a United Nations body. In late March of 1978, the Dutch Communist Party (CPN) was instrumental in organizing an "International Forum Against the Neutron Bomb" in Amsterdam, which brought in sympathizers from all over Europe and culminated on March 19 in a march of some 40,000 anti-"Neutron bomb" demonstrators.

In passing, it should be noted that while the appellation "neutron bomb" has been used occasionally—and incorrectly—in the Western press, the Soviets have employed this appellation consistently in their propaganda because it has far greater scare potential. To be precise, we should speak of "neutron weapon". Neutron weapons, by their nature, are designed for discriminating use on the battlefield and not for destroying cities. They do not pose a danger to the civilian population because they do not produce radioactive fallout and their lethal effect would have a maximum radius of about 1000 yards. However, used primarily as artillery shells, they would be deadly to tank formations because the burst of neutrons could penetrate the heaviest armor to kill or incapacitate tank crews. The possession of an arsenal of such weapons would put NATO in a position to nullify the overwhelming advantage which the Soviets now possess in tank divisions. That is why the Soviets singled out the proposed deployment of neutron weapons for special attention. And that is why their propaganda presented the "neutron bomb" as the most horrifying of all nuclear weapons, when, in reality—as nuclear weapons go—it is without question the most humane.

Summarizing the scope of the Soviet effort on the "neutron bomb," Mr. McMahan estimated that, over a three year period, the Soviets have put over \$100,000,000 into this campaign in the form of subsidies to West European communist parties and front groups, the organization of front operations and gatherings, the suborning of non-communists, etc. This concerted effort, the report noted, paid off. It quoted Janos Berecz, Chief of the International Department of the Hungarian Communist Party, as saying that "the political campaign against the neutron bomb was the most significant and most successful since World War II." And it noted that the Soviet ambassador to the Hague was subsequently decorated by his government in recognition of the success which the Dutch Communist Party had had, under his direction, in organizing the March 17-19 demonstration in Amsterdam, which was the high point of the anti-neutron bomb campaign.

—Prepared by David Martin.